

IMPACT PROJECT

**Improved Municipal Planning for African Cities:
For a climate resilient urban future**

A research collaboration between ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, the African Climate & Development Initiative (ACDI), Chinhoyi University of Technology and the University of Malawi

Improved Municipal Planning in African Cities – IMPACT – for a climate resilient urban future is a three year project implemented in Zimbabwe and Malawi. The project aims to investigate how enhanced collaboration mechanisms in municipal planning in African cities can enable climate resilient development.

These mechanisms are processes and/or interventions that enable collaboration between diverse stakeholders, and often lead to decisions being made that can influence how the city is planned and development is implemented. Examples of collaboration mechanisms include multi-sectoral forums, conferences, community-led mapping, ward committees and think tanks.



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Meeting the challenge

Collaborative governance can improve municipal planning and, in turn, increase the resilience of cities to the effects of climate change and numerous social challenges. Sub-Saharan Africa's most pressing challenges include, amongst others, service provision, skills development and sustainable governance systems. Climate change overlays these existing challenges, leading to local government officials being required to deal with ever-increasing complexity and uncertainty in decision-making. **Governments cannot deal with these challenges or harness the solutions alone and therefore must find innovative ways to engage with research, community and private sector institutions.**

As evidenced in ICLEI Africa's work, local governments often lack the necessary collaboration mechanisms to effectively harness these relationships for inclusive governance and decision-making that builds local level climate resilience. Where collaboration mechanisms have been adopted to some extent, they rarely achieve maximum effectiveness due to a variety of complex barriers. This research seeks to concretise what these barriers are and how they can be overcome.

The project will be seeking to answer the following research question:

How can African cities implement collaboration mechanisms that enable Improved Municipal Planning in African CiTies (IMPACT) for climate resilient development?

- What collaboration mechanisms exist already and what impact have these mechanisms had?
- What are the barriers and enablers to the implementation and maintenance of these mechanisms?
- In what ways and under what conditions will these mechanisms enable improved planning for climate resilient development?

Where we are engaging

The IMPACT project will be implemented in two cities in both Malawi and Zimbabwe. These countries are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and both have a policy environment supportive of climate resilient development and collaborative governance.



co-production
co-exploration
value creation

What we aim to do

- Understand the context of each of the project cities and how climate resilient development is tackled in each of them.
- Develop locally relevant criteria for the assessment of the effectiveness of collaboration mechanisms that enable Improved Municipal Planning in African CiTies (IMPACT) for climate resilient development.
- Identify and assess the barriers and enablers of these mechanisms in the project cities.
- Assess in what ways tailor-made collaboration mechanisms can be successful in enabling improved planning for climate resilient development.
- Build the capacity of stakeholders engaged in the project to implement contextually relevant collaboration mechanisms that contribute to improved planning and climate resilient development.
- Develop guidelines for the implementation of these collaboration mechanisms, to support more inclusive governance processes that contribute to climate resilient development in African cities.



How we plan to do it

The project requires a **systems-thinking approach** to investigate the intersection between urban transitions, climate change and developing urban resilience. Critical to this, is seeing cities as complex social-ecological systems that intricately connect humans and ecosystems through resource and service feedback loops.

The methodology focuses on **co-production, co-exploration and value creation** to develop contextually appropriate responses. This requires engaging and collaborating with a range of stakeholders in different sectors of society and levels of government, within each project city.



At a glance

Project name: IMPACT

Full title: Improved Municipal Planning in African CiTies – IMPACT – for a climate resilient urban future

Funded by: International Development Research Centre (IDRC), a Crown Corporation of the Government of Canada, Project Number 108665-001

Project duration: Three years – 2018 to 2020

Project countries: Malawi and Zimbabwe

Project team

ICLEI Africa – Dr Meggan Spires, Rebecca Cameron, Nontsikelelo Mngqibisa, Claudia Schroder

The African Climate Development Initiative (ACDI), an initiative of the University of Cape Town – Associate Professor Gina Ziervogel, Dr Lorena Pasquini, Professor Sheona Shackleton

The University of Malawi – Dr Burnet Mkandawire

The Chinhoyi University of Technology – Dr Chipo Plaxedes Mubaya



Project team members at the IMPACT project inception meeting

L-R back: Dr Lorena Pasquini, Dr Meggan Spires, Dr Burnet Mkandawire, Sandra Gagnon, Nontsikelelo Mngqibisa, Rebecca Cameron, Dr Rika Preiser

L-R front: Dr Chipo Plaxedes Mubaya, Professor Sheona Shackleton, Claudia Schroder, and Associate Professor Gina Ziervogel

About ICLEI Africa

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, or ICLEI for short, is the leading global network of over 1,500 cities, towns and regions committed to building a sustainable urban future. We work with a wide range of cities and other subnational governments in over 85 countries.

We serve our African members from our offices based in Cape Town, where we work with cities and regions across sub-Saharan Africa. We have a specific focus on climate change and energy, nature-based solutions, urban planning, infrastructure, food systems, and water and sanitation. Underpinning these themes, our projects are designed to strengthen local leadership and promote good governance, foster innovative partnerships and enable new finance options.

ICLEI Africa's work is conducted by a dynamic and passionate team of professionals that seek to work with cities to ensure a more sustainable future.

Funded by



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Research lead



Research support



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